

Patience by DreamCatcher37

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Summary: How far would you go for your first meal in years? Full summary inside!

Patience

***Ollo, all. It's me again. So here's the summary.

Three kids see what looks to be a drugged-up clown in a storm drain and decide to take justice into their own hands. And what are teenagers good at? Making people's lives a living hell. So here you have it.***

"I mean, it's so obvious that Ikuto and Amu should be together. It's fate. It's the *will of the writers*. Duh, they are gonna be together!" Katie argued.

"Dude...Andy told me that in the end they don't! Amu doesn't chose anyone!" I retorted.

"You guys are just weird." Drake complained. We ignored him.

"But she doesn't know that, does she?" Katie asked. Silly Katie.

"Yeah, she does. Andy's a veteran Anime Analyzer." I countered. "And besides, she's seen the whole series. To the end."

"...Amu has hormone problems." Katie said.

We both cracked up while Drake stood there and gave us a weird look.

"Okay, guys, just help me with this already." He whined once we could breathe again.

"Meh, whatever." Katie said. She walked back to Drake and his wagon full of sandbags and I followed her.

"Y'know..." I said, grabbing my half of the handle and pulling. "...considering you're a big strong *man*...couldn't you drag this up the hill by yourself, Einstein?"

"Just shut up and pull." Drake commanded. Yeah, right.

"You know your name means 'duck,' right?" Katie asked. I giggled.

"Shut up already!" Drake yelled.

I decided that if he was gonna act that way, he might as well dam up the overflow on his own. I let go of my side of the handle. He can have my portion of the money his dad promised us. Apparently Katie agreed with me, because she let go and put her hands on her hips. And apparently the 'big strong man' didn't have a good grip on the wagon handle because it slipped out of his hand and started rolling back down the hill into the cul-de-sac.

"Great job, retard!" he complained. He made it obvious that he'd rather whine than chase after the wagon, so I set out after it.

The red wagon piled high with sand bags rolled down the hill, handle clattering over the asphalt, and curved a little bit, turning to the right and stopping just next to the storm drain. I was just happy it didn't run into anyone's parked car. Stupid Drake.

Or should I say, stupid duck?

I smiled at the amusing thought and jogged up to the wagon. I thought I heard a voice. Then I definitely heard a voice. It was calling for help.

"H-hello?" I called meekly.

"What's up?" Katie asked. It took her a little bit longer to get down the hill in heels.

"I think there's someone down there..." I murmured. The wagon was blocking my view, but I thought that was where the voice was coming from.

"The heck are you guys doing? Let's go already." Drake said, jogging up to us.

"What, the storm drain?" she asked. It didn't sound like she was mocking me. We'd been down there once or twice, too. Maybe Sam or someone got stuck there. LOL.

I got down on my hands and knees and peered under the drain. Sure enough I saw a figure down there. The light didn't reach down there

what with the wagon and all, so I couldn't really see it, but I saw its shape. It looked like Sam-Drake's older brother-a little bit.

"Yo! What's the problem?" I asked.

Katie kneeled beside me and Drake bent down.

"Move the wagon please..." the voice growled.

"Holy shit, there's someone in there!" Drake yelled.

"N'aw. It's just a raccoon." Katie said. In her neighborhood, the storm drain was a popular hiding spot (not to mention convenient garbage can.) One just had to lever open the cheap plastic manhole cover and climb down. In fact, Sam did that every Halloween. It didn't really surprise me that there was someone hanging out in the sewer. It just surprised me a bit that it looked like a grownup.

"Move the wagon..."

"What's the problem, senor?" I asked, totally confused.

"Oh. We ran over his fingers." Katie said.

Then I saw it-he was trying to tug his hand away from the wagon. Oops.

"Move the goddamn wagon!" the thing cursed.

"...we should probably do that." Katie said. I nodded and stood up. Katie and I pulled the wagon away (Drake just stood there like an idiot) and I thought I heard something crunch. The person in the storm drain howled.

"Jeez, sorry, mister." Drake said quietly.

"...oh, it's okay..." the guy said. It wasn't very convincing. Especially since he was cowering in the back of the drain and cradling his hand.

"You sure? You want us to call anyone?" Katie said, always the calm one in emergencies. Me? I smelled a lawsuit in our future.

"Oh, yes, that'd be wonderful." The person said in a way-too-calm voice. "You see, the circus was washed down here. Just-Whoosh! The whole circus was washed down the drain!"

"The...circus." I said numbly. My crackpot radar was driving me nuts.

"Yeah! The whole circus!" the thing said, taking a step forward. "Can't you smell it?"

The smell hit my nose. It was the smell of peanuts, animal dung, straw, dust and candy. That's when I lost it. Because surely this was Sam and some sorta new toy from the Internet that could make people smell the circus. It wasn't too far fetched...

"Oh, you are one crazy mofo!" I laughed. "Really, you're too much!"

I saw the person's mouth widen a bit in a grin.

"Yeah, really Sam, get out here. The joke's over. And we just ran you over with a 1-ton wagon. C'mon, let's go to the hospital." Katie said.

"I don't need a doctor. I'm fine. See?" the thing crooned, because when it held its hand up to the light I was sure I wasn't messing with anything human. Its hand was *human-ish*. There were yellowed, gore-encrusted claws for nails and the whole thing was white and bloated. And the fingers were broken and bent back in half, just starting to turn purple.

"Damn, dude, you need a bandaid." I laughed. This guy was really too much.

At that point my subconscious was thinking 'You're a psychologist. Let's have some fun with this.' And my conscious mind was like, 'Fuck yeah, this'll be a ball! Let's see who can be more disturbing!'

"Yeah, I've seen worse." Drake said, looking bored.

"Like that guy from Naruto. Now he was seriously fucked up." Katie added. The hand disappeared from the bar of light and a face popped up-it was a clown. Like state-fair-balloon-animal-pun-lovin' clown. And it was freakish, too. Red hair and makeup and pointed teeth. I was unimpressed.

"Hey, remember those girls from the bus? Crystal and Vienna or something like that?" Katie asked me.

"Uh, yeah, I think so." I responded.

"Yup. I was just wondering, did you just come from a makeup party with them? 'Cuz I could swear they did their eyebrows just like yours." Katie said nonchalantly.

"Uh huh!" I laughed. "With sharpie. And apparently they travel by sewer...so that would explain the smell."

The clown's smile faded a little bit more.

"...don't you smell the circus?" it said quietly.

"Yeah. Might wanna lighten up on the perfume." Drake said. That guy just earned back a little bit of the respect he had never gained in my eyes. I was giggling hard.

"But seriously, though. You're just adorable. What's your name?" I asked, sobering up a little bit.

"I'm Pennywise, of course." The sewer clown said with a forced sort of smile. "Pennywise the Dancing Clown."

"Y'sure it's not Sam?" Drake asked.

"I ate Sam."

"Mm hmm. Sure you did." I said in a talking-to-little-kids-voice.

"Crackhead serial killer." Katie whispered to me.

"Yeah, no kidding. Let's have some fun vigilante justice." I whispered back, just loud enough that Drake could hear, but the Meth Clown couldn't.

"Hey, y'wanna balloon?" the Meth Clown asked.

"Ooh, balloon time!" Katie cheered. I sensed a trap.

"Waaiiit...I don't see any balloons!" Drake observed.

"Why, it's right here!" the clown said. A bright red balloon rose into view to the clown's left, string held in his unbroken hand. His creepy smile had returned.

"Hey, do you got blue?" Drake said in his horrible modern American grammar.

"For sure!" the thing cheered. "There's blue and green and yellow and pink and-"

"I call blue! None of you can have blue!" Drake yelled, cutting the Meth Clown off in mid-rant. It glared at him with an annoyed look.

"That's cool. But...one thing..." I started, watching the clown's face. It turned its dark eyes to me, which slightly creeped me out. (Just slightly though.)

"What is it?" the clown said, grinning-or maybe grimacing-up at me.

"...there is a clown in the storm drain. What the hell did you put in my Coke?" I said to Drake. He smiled and rolled his eyes.

"Oh, I'm real. You don't believe me?" the clown said, talking to me like I was a 2-year-old, obviously not getting the joke. "Here, have a balloon. Come see the circus with us."

"I think we're all trippin." Katie said flatly. "Either we are or he is."

'Alright guys, keep stalling. This is great.' I thought, watching the clown's annoyed glare return.

"Fer sure. But hell, free balloon!" Drake cheered.

"A'ight, creepalicious, I'd like a balloon." I said snobbishly. The look on its face said 'Hallelujah! Now we're getting somewhere!'

"Here's a balloon..." it said ominously, looking from the balloon to me like he expected me to take it.

"...Hmm...I like teal..." I said hopefully.

"There's teal, too." It said even more hopefully. Desperately?

"Ooh, goodie! I'll have one of those!" I said.

"Well, here it is." The clown said, holding up a balloon that was my absolute favorite color. I wondered how he got it so quickly. "...come and get it."

"Okay then!" I said teasingly.

I took one step towards him...make that two...and then stopped dead, shaking my head.

"You gotta draw a funny face on it." I said.

That clown looked like he would've strangled me then and there, if he could've gotten his body out of that storm drain.

"Yeah. Don't you know anything? There's gotta be a funny face on it. And you have to draw it." Katie said. BFF's always back each other up.

The Meth Clown just glared at me for a second.

"Dude, the Dominos pizza guys will draw anything you want on the box." I said, like it was totally obvious. Silently, the clown let go of the red balloon-it slowly drifted up against the drain's opening-and grabbed a sharpie out of a pocket on his clown suit and opened it.

"Make it a vampire!" Katie cheered.

"And give it a mustache." Drake added.

The clown quickly scribbled out a fanged smiley face on it-not a very good one-and then looked expectantly back up at me.

"What about the eyebrows?" I asked.

Pennywise frowned and turned back to the balloon face, drawing two quick lines on it above the eyes.

"Hmm...he looks like a glasses guy. Give him glasses." I mused. The clown's scowl deepened as he carefully drew glasses onto it.

"Now we gotta name it." Katie said.

"Oh, yeah, right." I said. "What about Fred?"

"N'aw, he looks more like a Bernie." Drake said. 'Yeah right.' I thought.

"I like John Jacob Jangleheimer Schmidt." Katie added.

"Hmm...I dunno. What do you think, Pennywise?" I asked sweetly.

Meth Clown just glared at the balloon like it was the one fucking with his mind instead of us. 'Maybe if you stare at it hard enough, it'll spontaneously burst into flames.' I thought with a smile.

"...I like Katie's suggestion." I concluded. "Could you write that on the back for me?"

"Do you want the fucking balloon or not?" it yelled.

"Jeez, man! Okay! Okay! Cool it already!" I said defensively. I bent down and picked up a long stick from the middle of the road. I looked at the little nub of a branch on the end that sort of formed a hook and nodded my approval. Then I looked back down at the clown-it looked like he was doing that counting to 10 anger management thing.

"...Now will you come here and visit the circus with me?" he begged, sounding a bit exasperated.

"Whoa, man, I'm too young for you. Let's stick with balloons for now." I said calmly.

"In other news...can you say 'desperate'?" Drake added.

"Drake, play nice." I scolded. When my back was turned he flipped me the bird and Katie hit him on the back of the head with her empty Gatorade bottle. I held the stick out towards the sewer drain and he just looked at it hungrily.

"Now put the balloon on the end of the stick, if you will." I said sweetly.

"Why don't you come here and get it yourself?" the clown begged.
"Don't you like me?"

"Course we do, Pogo." Katie said.

"...it's Pennywise." The clown growled.

"Sure thing, Pogo." Katie teased. Meth Clown tried the counting to 10 trick again.

"Seriously, just tie the balloon onto the end of the stick and we'll be cool. Alright?" I said in an impatient voice.

"Sure you don't want some cotton candy, too?" Pennywise asked in a creepy, sing-song voice. "Or a lollipop? A big one? And we have horses down here, too. Yes. They were part of the show. Pretty roans and bays, chestnuts and dapple greys. They're all very lonely down here. What about a pony ride?"

"Less you can tie a pony on the end of this stick, I think I'll have to take a rain check." I said in an annoyed voice. By the look on the clown's face I could tell I was losing my audience, so I added- "but I'll think about it."

"Good. And here's your balloon-better grab it, 'cuz it floats and you don't want to lose it..." the clown crooned ominously. 'Veeery reassuring, Pennywise.'

"I'll take my chances." I said in a low, annoyed voice. It was balloon time and this guy was in between me and John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt.

"...very well." Pennywise growled. He reached forward and slowly looped the green string loosely around the end of the stick, (how the heck do you pull that off with those broken fingers?), watching me with a ravenous look in his eyes. After he'd let go of the string, before I had the chance to yank it away, he grabbed the stick with both hands and tried to pull me down into the sewer. I let out a yell and braced myself. Lemme tell you, that clown was strong. He almost had me when-

I stumbled backwards. My mind pieced together what happened

before I could catch my balance. The end of the stick had snapped off. And if I wasn't mistaken...

I glanced back at Pennywise, clutching his little piece of the stick, caught somewhere between bewilderment and pure rage. And there was my balloon, my precious John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt, sailing into the light blue sky.

"Oops." I muttered.

"...Pity." Drake remarked sarcastically.

"A real shame." Katie added softly.

A moment of silence went by as we watched the balloon go up, up, up forever.

"...so can I have a blue one now?" Drake asked innocently.

"Hold on, he's gotta redraw mine." I answered.

Pennywise just looked at me, eyes burning with Hell's fury, and disappeared into the dark sewer-taking the red balloon with him.

"...was it something I said?" I asked, confused.

"I think you killed it." Drake said with a disappointed tone. He dared to step closer to the storm drain. We held our breath but nothing happened-not so much as a sound came from the dark hole in the ground.

"I'm gonna miss Pogo." Katie lamented.

"Me too..." I added.

"And I didn't get a balloon." Drake said sadly.

"Should we call the cops?" Katie asked.

"Nah, if he's happy down there, let the little guy be." Drake said. He was probably hoping to find him later and ask for a balloon.

"Yeah, to each their own. We better go dam up the overflow." I said

with a sigh.

"I never understood that phrase..." Katie mused.

I walked towards the wagon full of sand bags, making sure to keep away from the gaping hole in the ground. Then I felt something wet and sticky brush my ankle.

I looked down. A long, wet, snakelike thing was wrapping itself around my ankle. (I'd seen worse on TV.) I traced it back to its source and my eyes met the face of the clown, jaws wide open, pink tongue rolled out from behind yellow sharklike teeth. I'd totally forgotten about the storm drain on the other side of the street.

I cried out in disgust and before the tongue could sweep my leg out from under me, grabbed a bag of sand and dropped it by my foot-right onto the pink tongue.

Pennywise howled and it's tongue unwrapped itself from my ankle. It started writhing like a dying snake.

"Damn!" Katie cursed.

"Ewww...." Drake said.

"Ugh, it's spit is on me..." I said, wincing.

Katie stepped on the end of its tongue with her heels. It screeched even more. Drake muttered something like 'Cool!' under his breath and rolled the 100-pound wagon from its spot by the curb over the Meth Clown's gross tongue, watching with amusement and some satisfaction.

"Jeez, man, you need counseling." Katie said. "Let's go."

"Bye, Pogo. And welcome to the 21st century." I said sadly, following Katie and Drake. We got out of earshot of the clown and started talking again.

"Why can't I get a balloon?" Drake whined.

"Feel free to go back there." Katie grumbled.

We looked back at the long tongue trapped under the bag of sand. It was stretched nearly all the way across the road. I saw a car backing out of a driveway in the cul-de-sac and realized that if it didn't stop in time it'd run right over his tongue. Serves him right for eating people.

But still, I felt bad. All he wanted to do was give me a balloon, take me to the circus, and maybe eat my soul. Maybe we *had* taken it too far.

But a last glance back told me that we'd be seeing one another again reeeeal soon. The hideous pink tongue had freed itself from the sandbag and slithered back into the storm drain. I turned back to the group pulling the wagon and thought 'Gee, I hope he has more teal balloons.'

Written in fond memory of Drake, Katie, and Mary. RIP.